HUMAN LIFE
AND
THE HEREAFTER

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Translated by
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Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers
New Delhi - 110025

Dawah Book Series - 09

Human Welfare Trust Publication No. 1488
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Name of the Book
HUMAN LIFE AND THE HEREAFTER

Pages: 56

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Translated by
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Price: ` 35.00

First Edition December 2017 1,100

ISBN 81-8088-471-9

Published by
Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers
D-307, Dawat Nagar, Abul Fazl Enclave,
Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi – 110025
Ph: 26981652, 26984347
E-mail: mmipublishers@gmail.com
Website: www.mmipublishers.net

Printed at Sonu Printers, New Delhi – 20

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PREFACE

Death is such a reality that man cannot deny it. Man sees his relatives and friends passing into the jaws of death, but cannot save them from death. At that time, he also thinks that one day or the other he also has to die and will have to leave this world forever.

There are some questions, finding correct answers to which are essential for man. For example, what is life; who is the creator of life; what does He require of us; what is death; is there life after death or not; and if there is life after death, what should we do in this worldly life to be successful in the Hereafter; and if there is no life after death, whether death is the end of life.

Many philosophers and intellectuals have pondered over these questions, particularly on the issue of life after death. Even some of the religions have thrown light on this issue; some of the views expressed are as follows:

1. The life here is the real and final life. There is no life after death. Hence, man should try to make this life more successful in every respect. The purpose of life is just enjoyment and leading a luxurious and licentious life.
2. Some people think that there is a life after death. You can call it the life in the Hereafter. Paradise and Hell are also the truth. To get entry into Paradise, it is essential to believe in the son of God and also accept that every human being is a born

sinner and that the son of God, by dying on the cross, has expiated the sins of the human beings.

3. Some other people think that the life does not end after death. Man repeatedly takes birth in this world to suffer the consequences of the sins and bad deeds committed by him in this world – sometimes in the form of cattle, or vermin, or plants and trees, and sometimes as human being. It is said that man can achieve salvation only after 84 lakh re-births.
4. Yet another concept is that this worldly life is a test and trial for man and that the Creator of man and other living and non-living things is One, and that is Allah. Allah has bestowed man with intelligence so that he can ponder and lead the life in this world believing that there is an eternal life after death. Whoever believed Allah to be One, the Master, the Creator, and the Sustainer, and followed the Straight Path shown by Him in this worldly life, he will become eligible for Paradise, and this will be the greatest success for him. The one who disbelieved in Allah and did not follow His Path and did not lead his life according to the Will of Allah, he will become entitled for a life in Hell, and he will have to eternally suffer the Fire of the Hell. This will be the greatest failure for him. Man is accountable before Allah for each and every action performed by him in this world.

These thoughts and concepts about this issue are not only quite different from each other but also oppose each other. All of these perceptions cannot be correct and true. It is man's responsibility to ponder over these different concepts and reach a conclusion as to which of them is the Truth and which is nearer to the Truth.

A few articles about the issue of life after death have been compiled in this book, so that a correct conclusion could be reached through them. We get only one life in this world and, therefore, it is essential for us to carefully think and take a considered decision about the life after death. If a wrong decision today entails in terrible wrath and fire of Hell tomorrow, it will be a frightful result.

Those who are not prepared to believe in life after death without seeing it with their own eyes, can only say with conviction that they do not know whether there is life after death or not. But they cannot say for sure that they know for a fact that there is no life after death. To know the truth about something, it is not necessary to see it with our eyes. Till today none has come back from death to tell us that there is life after death, there is Paradise and Hell, or to tell us for a fact that there is no life after death, that the concept of Paradise and Hell is false and that he has seen with his own eyes that there is nothing there. When we are faced with such a situation with regard to a very important issue of life, what is the correct way of reaching the truth?

When we cannot see with our own eyes whether there is life after death or not, the only way open to us is to ponder over our birth and the signs in the universe and form an opinion about its truth or untruth.

It is understood from the religious books like the Vedas and the Bible that there is life after death and that the Paradise and the Hell are facts. After the destruction of the world, the dead will be brought to life and they will see with their own eyes the Paradise and the Hell, and this is a fact. The Holy Quran was revealed on Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) nearly 1450

years ago. This is the final Message. It contains guidance for the entire mankind. No other book will be revealed after this Book for the guidance of mankind. To know and believe in the unseen facts, the Holy Quran invites us to ponder over the signs of nature spread all over the universe, and also describes about their necessities and demands.

The Holy Quran also tells us about the loss and depravation that will be incurred by not believing in these truths. Therefore, Allah has given intelligence and the power to think only to man. It is a great moment of test and trial for man whether he reaches a correct conclusion about the basic questions of life and his final end by using his mental faculties as he uses them to fulfil his material needs like food, shelter, etc.

I appeal to the readers of these articles to ponder over them clearing their hearts and minds from old perceptions and rising above all prejudices. It is essential for you to think that eternal life after death, Paradise and Hell, are all truths, and that if you were to lead this worldly life by rejecting the life in the Hereafter, what would be the consequences.

After reading these articles, the reader should not let anything to come into his way in believing that after death he has to give account of all his deeds and actions performed in this world, because disbelieving a reality does not change the truth, and the result of disbelief will entail in grave losses and depravation.

Belief in One Omnipotent and All-Pervading Allah and the belief that we have to be accountable before Him for all our acts and deeds make practical demands on man, and it is essential for man to know these demands and fulfil them in his life. If this is not done, then there is no meaning in belief or unbelief.

Particularly, it is essential to believe in those Prophets through whom Allah has sent His Message and Guidance and finally in the last Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) and the final Book, the Quran, revealed on him.

We hope that this book will be of great help to its readers in understanding and accepting the truth about this very important issue of human life and making a correct decision.

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AFTER THIS LIFE, WHAT?

Muhammad Zainul Abdeen Mansoori

Our country is chiefly a religious country. From ancient times, religion in its different denominations has existed here. In other words, religiosity has been the prominent particularity of this society. This has very much influenced the inhabitants of this country. Hence, it is a self-evident reality that there has always been a need of religious principles for the human life, but this fact should also be not forgotten that just the presence of religious mentality and ideologies in the society is not enough; rather the question of their original nature is quite important. The more the religious values will be natural, the more they will be influential and will be able to build man's morality and his character and conduct more excellently.

The Indian society has been plagued with numerous serious problems. These problems are increasing day by day. The principal reason for this is the decline of the original religious values and the assault of materialistic culture. Some very selfish people, to achieve their selfish motives, have created in the commonality fictitious problems which are taking dreadful forms and shapes. These have influenced the hearts and minds of the people to such an extent that wilfulness, promiscuity and capriciousness are spreading in their life, which has resulted in the decline in religiosity and devotion to

God. Religion has limited itself to external display only and man is becoming a victim of narrow-mindedness. He has become just a materialistic machine. All his activities have been limited to achieve more and more worldly and materialistic comforts. Right or wrong, he wants to acquire the worldly goods. Neither he believes in the life after death nor does he have the sense of accountability in him that he has to account for his actions before his Creator. If at all this belief in the life after death is found, it does not influence much the life of the people because of its fictitiousness and superficiality.

Evil Effects of Disbelief in the Hereafter

If the belief that there is another life after the probationary life in this world is ignored, many deteriorating changes take place in the human character. His individuality gets shrivelled and impaired. He does not care for human values, dignity and morality. He is generally not inclined towards righteous deeds. His every action gets profit-oriented. He does not mind adopting wicked, evil and corrupt ways and means. In this manner, the society gets filled with various kinds of evils, problems and impairments. We can very clearly see this plight and misery of the present-day society.

Today, majority of human beings have become carefree and irresponsible with regard to their deeds and actions. They are not worried about the fact that in the lift that comes after this life they have to give account of all their actions and deeds before the Omnipotent God. If his deeds were found to be good and righteous, he will be richly rewarded and will be worthy of Paradise, and if he goes to the other world

carrying with him wicked deeds, he will be severely punished and he will be a resident of the Hell. Belief in the Hereafter not only guides man towards the right path and creates in him good behaviour and lofty characteristics, but it also fulfils the demands of the objective of man's creation; it also fulfils the demands of real justice and God's wisdom that every action and deed essentially should be suitably recompensed.

When man is not dutiful towards his Creator and when he will be ignorant and carefree about the accountability of his deeds and actions, it is clear that he will be away from righteous and virtuous activities and whatever he does will be harmful to others. Also he will always be the cause for misery, harm and misfortune.

Disorders of Human Life

The human life suffers from numerous problems and disorders when man does not have the correct perception of the Hereafter. When man does not have the belief in his heart that he has to give an account of all his actions and deeds before the Omnipotent Lord and he does not fear God with regard to his thoughts and actions, he leads a carefree and independent life. He does not care for which is lawful or unlawful, which is proper or improper and which is honourable or dishonourable, so much so that he will not hesitate to play with human life and belongings.

Because of not having the right concept of devotion to God and the system of consequences of actions in the Hereafter, man in his contemptible self-interests gets so blinded that he does not hesitate to kill innocent people and young children, loot their wealth and belongings, and rape and oppress the women and

girls and thus exhibit his cruelty. Further, he deprives the rights of others. By popularising and spreading the businesses of alcoholism, usury, promiscuity, nudity and indecency, he destroys people's physical and spiritual abilities and faculties and gives them a wrong direction in life. He not only oppresses but helps in oppressing the weaker sections of the society. He enjoys and placates his ego by trampling the self-respect of the people. He never treats them with honour and justice.

In this manner, he compels the weak to remain oppressed. He never pays any attention to their pain and sufferings and never extends any help to alleviate them. This way the cycle of violence, oppression, turmoil and injustice goes on forever and ever. To justify all these acts and to blunt the opposition to them, it is said that these are all part of destiny and a sort of punishment for the past misdeeds. Then the society becomes disconsolate.

Benefits of Belief in the Hereafter

On the other hand, belief in the Hereafter develops the man's character, he performs virtuous and righteous deeds, never usurps the rights of others, nor does he oppresses and tyrannises others. He wants to see everyone prosperous and likes others to have the same things which he likes for himself. He does not crave for the comforts of this worldly life at the cost of others and never thinks this world to be everything. His vision gets broadened, i.e. not giving any undue consideration to the temporary benefits of the world, he becomes desirous of the permanent happiness, success and peace and tranquillity in the Hereafter. To achieve this goal, he always performs good and

virtuous deeds and keeps away from evil, corruption, oppression and indecency.

Further, courage and enthusiasm develops in the man who believes in the Hereafter. He does not cultivate any sense of disappointment and cowardice. To achieve the success and salvation in the Hereafter, he confronts all the difficulties and problems of the world with courage and patience. He does not get entangled with the problems of this life in such a way as to make him stumble on the straight path; rather, he faces every difficulty with courage and enthusiasm and does not lose heart. He does not get dejected by the failures in the world but goes on discharging his duties honestly, because he believes that all the untoward circumstances are confined only to this worldly life, and he will surely be richly rewarded with happiness and comforts in the Hereafter for his honest and virtuous life.

He also very well knows that his success in the Hereafter depends on his joining hands to create the environment of order in place of disorder, establish peace and tranquillity in place of chaos and oppression, and to clear the world of evil and wrongdoing. He also helps the destitute, the weak and the helpless irrespective of their religion, caste and creed. A true believer in the Hereafter is always prepared to annihilate corruption, oppression, and evil from the society. Also, he will always be engaged in performing virtuous deeds. For this purpose, he is prepared to even sacrifice his life and belongings. In this manner, the society that is built on true virtues and true values will be free from evil and oppression. The members of such a society will have the feeling of sympathy, mercy and support for each other; rather,

they will give preference to the needs of others over their needs. They will not have the bad qualities of arrogance, hypocrisy, etc. in them. They will fear only God which results in their not fearing any other being, which helps them to fearlessly walk on the Divine Path. This happens because they believe that the life in the Hereafter will be in the hands of God. In this manner, man moves from darkness to light and performing good and virtuous deeds achieves success both in this world and the Hereafter.

Perception of the Hereafter in Islam

The belief in the Hereafter is one of the fundamental pillars of Islam. There is a deep relationship of this world with the Hereafter. The Hereafter is the advanced form of this world. Whatever deficiencies we find here, they will be rectified there. The things that have remained hidden here will be exposed there. Man does not receive full reward or punishment for his good or bad deeds in this world. The effects of man's good or bad deeds do not confine to his life in this world, but extend to centuries after his death.

When a person educates and purifies people, its effects are felt for a long period of time. Similarly, if a person gave mankind a wrong direction and committed oppression, their bad effects also remain for a long period of time. Hence, to evaluate the goodness of the good deeds and the evil of the bad deeds, it is essential to take into consideration the effects of all kinds of deeds and their proofs and evidences are gathered and the judgement of punishment is pronounced against the culprits before those very people who had to suffer losses and injuries because of their bad deeds. Such

kind of full justice is impossible in this limited human life, and hence for such a full and unbiased justice, the Hereafter is essential.

One of the conceptions of Islam is that man's life in this world is for test and trial. This world is transitory and it is bound to perish one day. The lasting life is the life of the Hereafter. If man believes in the Oneness of God, the Prophethood and the Hereafter, obeys the Divine commands and performs good deeds in his life, he will be richly rewarded in the Hereafter and will be admitted into Paradise where he will get an everlasting life which will be full of peace, tranquillity, prosperity and salvation. On the contrary, the wicked and the wrong-doers will face the torments and sufferings of the Hell. It is the reality that whatever may be man's efforts and whatever may be his character and conduct, he will have to reap its fruit. Man cannot hide his deeds in the Hereafter. Everything will be exposed. On the Day of Judgement, man's ears, eyes, tongue, hands, legs and even his skin will bear witness for the deeds that he had committed in the world. In the Divine court of justice, the guilty will accept their crimes and will feel ashamed of their bad deeds. They will wish that they be sent back to the world so that they could come back after performing good deeds. But there will not be any occasion for it, as the probationary world would have ended forever, and there will be none who could help them in the Divine court of justice; no relationships or friendships will help them. Even those will not be of any help who had been made partners with Allah and in whom they had reposed all kinds of hopes. None will bear the burden of other and everyone will be worried about himself. On that day, every human being will be

presented with the Book of his Deeds. The Holy Quran very clearly says that man's deeds are being observed and recorded by the command of Allah.

The judgement pronounced in the Divine court of justice in respect of each and every one will be unbiased and full of justice. None will be oppressed nor will anyone's right be trampled. Everyone will be rewarded or punished according to the good or bad deeds he had committed in the world. On that day the scale of justice will be supreme. Those whose balance of good deeds will be heavy will achieve salvation and go to the Paradise and those whose balance of good deeds will be light will go the Hell.

Man does not like to incur losses or get himself harmed. It is his fundamental nature that he should become a servant of Allah and walk on the straight path shown by Him. However, when he allows his desires, base self-interests and temporal powers to enslave his fundamental nature, he rushes towards his doom. The natural qualities, ethical and religious principles and decorum slowly exit from his life and various kinds of evils and disorders take root in their place.

The reasons for the presence of evils and disorders that are found in man's life and society, which have been detailed in the beginning of this write-up, are carelessness, negligence, and inertness about the fear of God and the life in the Hereafter. Let us purify and cleanse our lives by adopting natural principles of religion. This way, not only we will be able to achieve success and salvation in the Hereafter, but in this world too we can rebuild our lives, our society and our nation and thus increase the honour and dignity of mankind.

*****

KARM, REBIRTH AND ISLAM

Dr. Muhammad Ahmed

In various kinds of media, frequently such things are brought to our attention that certain boy or girl i.e. men and women of different age groups have the knowledge and account of their previous life. One of the TV channels, ignoring the future effects, and just for the sake of business and to increase its viewership, has claimed that it has the information about rebirth and the place of death of reborn persons. It is also claimed that a certain person is a "rebirth" of certain person, and it has also so happened that on this basis claim has been made in the inheritance of that person. This project is becoming a medium for self-propagation, but this concept has also been creating stalemate and problems in the human life. It is also being propagated that the wretched condition of a particular person is due to the result of his previous life and that he has to bear with it. The concept of rebirth is not found in the Vedas. This concept was introduced into the Hindu religion in the later era. Mahapandit Rahul Sankritiyayan questions its relevance and writes that it has been created to hide the social oppressions. He writes:

> *"A rebirth in the same world will be a dangerous thing for the suffering people. It not only says that you should forget about the present sufferings, but it also says that the social inequalities are justified, because the world exists in this form because of the "practices"*

(sufferings, oppression) you adopted in your previous births. Without these inequalities you cannot get any rewards for your sufferings."[1]

The Renowned Sant Swami Paddmanaji and Swami Maheshwaranand have described as false 84 lakh rebirths revolving on the basis of past deeds and have written that there is no satisfactory answer to it. The renowned thinker Dr. M.N. Rai thinks that:

"The theory of rebirth gives birth to fatalism in the society and makes man inactive and unmanly."[2]

Pandit Mangaldev Vedalankar in his book *"Yam aur Pitr"* has condemned the recognition given to the prevailing concept of rebirth. Other scholars (Dr. Radhakrishna, Satiyakam Vighalankar, etc.) have not found this concept true and genuine whenever they tested it on the criteria of intellect and discretion. The renowned American scientist Dr. Ian Stevenson, who had investigated many claims of rebirths, has written a book titled *"Children Who Remember Previous Lives,"* in which he has claimed that he has not been able to reach any conclusion and that no claim has been proved to be true and genuine on the basis of intellect and discretion and which could prove the belief in soul and its rebirth.

When it was Investigated...

Till now, many scholars of our country have tried to make an intelligent study of the concept of rebirth on the basis of narratives of some stories of rebirth. Rai Bahadur Shyam Sunderlal, K.K.N. Sahay, Tarachand Mathur, Dr. M.C. Bose, Lala Deshbandhu

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[1] *Darshan-Digdarshan*, p. 403, Kitab Mahal, 1992.
[2] *Indian Message*, p. 14, 151.

Gupta, P. Agnia, Dr. Kedar, Dr. Kirti Swaroop Rawat, Dr. L.P. Mehrotra, Pandit Neki Ram Sharma, and other scholars have extensively written on the subject, but the questions that arise from their investigation nullify them on the criteria of intellect and discretion.

This concept of soul and transmigratory rebirth does not exist in Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and other religions. This belief and concept is found only in Hinduism and a few other religions, for which efforts are being made, since a long time, to "force" it on the public opinion. However, it should not be forgotten here that all the efforts in this regard to "convince and compel" have resulted in failure. To investigate and prove the scientific truth of this belief, a research wing was established in the University of Rajasthan in 1963. The renowned scientist Dr. H.N. Banerji was appointed as its president. Dr. Banerji was very talented and vehemently believed in honest research. Dr. Banerji took up more than 100 cases of the so-called rebirths for investigation which had been repeatedly referred to by different scholars. He constituted many teams for the purpose of research. These teams investigated the cases by going to the spots of the reported incidents. Dr. Banerji himself visited some of the places. For example, Dr. Banerji went to Turkey. The team included eminent doctors and psychologists. The team went to Turkey with adequate preparations. The story of rebirth as told by one Ismail of Adana District of Turkey in 1956 was being portrayed as evidence in favour of the concept of rebirth. Some people believed it to be the strongest case. However, Dr. Banerji neither could find the village which the Ismail had described nor could he

meet Ismail though the incident was said to have taken place only a few years ago.

Dr. Banerji tried his best but could not succeed in his efforts. Dr. Banerji has elaborately mentioned about this incident in his research paper. Now, let us also know about the result of the research that he took up on more than 100 cases of the rebirth. The entire concept of transmigratory rebirth fell to pieces; not even one case was found to be correct. Dr. Banerji was severely criticized by some parties. He was removed from his post and in 1968 mysteriously his Department was also closed down.

Lack of Scientific Proof

It has not yet been possible to prove the concept of rebirth. There is no scientific basis for this. The only reason for this is the non-existence of rebirth. According to a news report published on October 7, 1968, the psychologists who studied a few cases of rebirth have reached the conclusion that those people who describe happenings of their previous life were afflicted with the disease of psychic hysteria and whatever they describe is the result of this disease. Dr. B.K. Vyas of the Mental Hospital of Jaipur, and another specialist Dr. Ratan Singh claim that they have successfully treated some of the cases. In an interview given to the United News of India, Dr. Vyas has said that “those people who describe incidents of previous birth do not possess right mental balance. These are generally cases pertaining to personal problems. This way they obtain some other benefits by describing

fabricated stories." [1] Dr. Vyas has also given description of some cases in support of his claim.

Whatever incidents of rebirth have come to light in the country, their describers were either afflicted with mental disease, or to obtain some benefits a story was fabricated, or just as a fiction it was written that an incident of rebirth has happened at some place. Describing one such incident, Dr. L.P. Mehrotra writes: "This incident pertains to one boy whose sister had a recollection of previous birth, because of which he hated his sister and began to claim that he himself was the dead soul of Gandhiji. This boy had read about the life of Gandhiji in a book and with the help of that book he began describing him. When people came to know that Gandhiji has taken a rebirth, they came in large numbers to meet him. Prominent leaders of the Congress Party also went to meet him; even Sushila Nayyar also went to see him. Because of this that boy attained name and fame. But in the end he was exposed as a liar.

Historic Judgement of the Court

In 1978, the eminent writer Soma Sablok had a written a book in Hindi on rebirth titled *Atma aur Punarjanm*, in which she had rejected the rationality of transmigratory rebirth after studying it on the basis of scientific criteria.

A petitioner filed a case against the aforesaid book in the Tees Hazari Court of Delhi claiming that the said book strikes at the religious belief and hurts the sentiments of the people. The court, after examining

[1] Hindustan Times, New Delhi.

various aspects of the case, dismissed the petition on December 2, 1983, and said in the judgement:

> *"In this scientific age, everyone has the right to doubt and raise objection to the existence of soul and the concept of rebirth, because doing so is marching ahead in the direction of creating progressive ideology for which orders have been passed under Section 51(A) of the Indian Constitution. Keeping this objective in mind, the author has tried to make the students more knowledgeable through this book. It is to be said with great pain and agony that for making this effort the author has been accused of hurting the sentiments of the Hindus and she had to take the trouble of defending the case for many years. This book is an effort to search out the truth, and it cannot be said that the job of hurting the religious sentiments of the Hindus has been undertaken by writing this book. There are many religions including Christianity, Islam and Buddhism which do not believe in the concept of soul and its rebirth."*

A Few Simple Questions

No scientific, intellectual and practical facts are found in favour of transmigratory rebirth. On the other hand, a few simple questions arise about it:

1. Nature demands that man should be rewarded for his good deeds and punished for the bad deeds. However, it is impossible to fully accomplish this in this life. Moreover, in the perception of rebirth, we are unable to know for which kind of good or bad deeds we are being punished or rewarded. Therefore, there should be some arrangement, which should not only set free man from rebirth, but he should also be fully rewarded or punished according to his good or bad deeds performed in

this world. The Islamic belief in the Hereafter presents this concept very clearly and satisfactorily.

2. It is essential to have a life in the Hereafter for the dispensation of true justice.
3. According to the concept of transmigratory rebirth, animals, birds and vegetation are the result of man's bad deeds. Does this mean that man should commit more and more sins and bad deeds in order to increase their population?
4. The effects of man's deeds remain even after his death. An intelligent and judicious person expects that the after-effects of his good or bad deeds should properly be adjudged and then he should be rewarded or punished accordingly. In the absence of such an arrangement, full and complete reward or punishment cannot be given in this world.
5. It is a fact that when a person thinks that he has taken birth in order to serve the punishment for the bad deeds he had committed in his previous life, his humanness gets affected. Feelings of self-esteem, dignity and manliness are not developed; rather, he will lead a life full of feelings of depression, anguish, frustration, remorse and depravation. His progress in life gets affected.
6. Arrogance in people increases. Successful and prosperous people will treat the indigent and deprived people with contempt and scorn, resulting in the division of humanity on the basis of untouchability and inequality.

The Islamic Concept of After-Life

Islam is a complete system of life. Its teachings are beneficial to man in every aspect and help him achieve

deliverance and salvation. It is the clear truth and reality that man cannot be fully rewarded or punished for his good or bad deeds in this world. For this purpose, it is essential to have another world or the Hereafter. The concept of the Hereafter is found in all the major religions of the world; but Islam presents this concept in its purest and unadulterated form.

The concept of Islam is that man's life in this world is a test and trial for him. This is a transitory world and it is bound to end. Life in the Hereafter will be the lasting and eternal life. The life in this world is the opportunity to prepare for that eternal life in the Hereafter. If man leads his life according to the Divine instructions and guidance, and accepts and believes in monotheism, Prophethood, the life in the Hereafter and other beliefs, and spends his life in the performance of virtuous deeds, he will be richly rewarded in the Hereafter and he will become eligible for Paradise. He will achieve there an eternal life, peace and comfort and immortality. The life in the Hereafter will be the ultimate progressive form of the life in this world; there will not be any sort of shortages or shortcomings. The virtuous will live there forever. As against this, the wicked and the wrongdoers will be thrown into the raging fire of the Hell, where they will burn forever; they will also face other kinds of torments too.

Islam does not believe in the concept of rebirth, but believes in the concept of resurrection. It does not believe in the rebirth of man again and again. It completely rejects the concept of human soul wandering in animals, vegetation and other such things. According to Islam, all the people born from the very inception to the establishment of the Day of Judgement will be recreated again and Allah will take

account of all the deeds committed by them and will reward or punish them according to their good or bad deeds. The Holy Quran clarifies in this regard thus:

"And the Hour (of Judgement) is surely coming."

(15:85)

"Assuredly it is your Lord Who will gather them together." *(15:25)*

"And the Book (of Deeds) will be placed (before you); and you will see the sinful in great terror because of what is (recorded) therein; they will say: 'Ah! Woe to us! What a book is this! It leaves out nothing small or great, but takes account thereof!' They will find all that they did, placed before them; and not one will your Lord treat with injustice." *(18:49)*

"One Day we shall remove the mountains, and you will see the earth as a level stretch, and We shall gather them, all together, nor shall We leave out any one of them. And they will be marshalled before your Lord in ranks (with the announcement), 'Now you have come to us (bare) as We created you first; aye, you thought We shall not fulfil the appointment made to you to meet (Us)!" *(18:47-48)*

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has described the signs of the coming of the Day of Judgement as follows:

"Knowledge will be taken away; ignorance will be in abundance; adultery, vice and promiscuity will be widespread; people will drink wine (and other alcoholic drinks) abundantly; men will be less in numbers as against the women inasmuch as one man will take care of fifty women."

(Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmed, Tirmizi)

The Holy Quran avers:

"When the trumpet shall be sounded, behold, from the graves (men) will rush forth to their Lord." *(36:51)*

On the Day of Judgement, the sky will be cleft asunder (the Quran, 82:1; 84:1); the stars will fall, losing their lustre (the Quran, 81:2); the sun (with its spacious light) will be folded up (the Quran, 81:1); the mountains will be like carded wool (the Quran, 101:5); the earth will be pounded to powder and flattened out, and will cast forth what is within it and becomes (clean) empty (the Quran, 89:21; 84:3-4); the dead will be raised from their graves and the secrets locked up in the human breasts will be manifested (the Quran, 100:9-10); and on that Day men will be like scattered moths (the Quran, 101:4).

On the Day of Judgement, every person will be fully recompensed for his deeds. The Holy Quran avers:

> *"Then when the Trumpet is blown, there will be no more relationships between them that day, nor will one ask after another! Then those whose balance (of good deeds) is heavy – they will attain salvation. But those whose balance is light, will be those who have lost their souls; in Hell will they abide. The Fire will burn their faces, and they will therein grin, with their lips displaced."* *(23:101-104)*

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) says:

> *"Three things go along with a dead person: members of his family, his wealth and his deeds. Then two things return back and one will remain with him. Members of his family and his wealth return back and his deeds remain with him."* *(Bukhari, Muslim)*

It is stated in the Holy Quran:

> *"Every soul shall have a taste of death, and only on the Day of Judgement shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the*

object (of life): For the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception." (3:185)

"(On that day) each soul will be paid out just what it has earned, without (favour or) injustice." (3:25)

"On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all the good it has done, and all the evil it has done, it will wish there were a great distance between it and its evil." (3:30)

"That Day neither wealth nor sons will be of any use." (26:88)

"That Day shall We set a seal on their mouths. But their hands will speak to Us, and their feet bear witness, to all that they did." (36:65)[1]

Almighty Allah declares in the Holy Quran:

"We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgement, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least. And if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account." (21:47)

The Day of Judgement will be easy on the righteous and very harsh on the wrongdoers. The Holy Quran clarifies:

"If any do good, good will (accrue) to them therefrom; and they will be secure from terror that Day. And if any do evil, their faces will be thrown headlong into the Fire." (27:89-90)

"Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him ready (to note it)." (50:18)

"He (Allah) knows the unseen and that which is open; He is the Great, the Most High. It is the same (to Him) whether any of you conceal his speech or declare it openly; whether he lie hid by night or walk forth freely by day." (13:9-10)

[1] Also see the Quran, 41:20-24.

"Then he who is given the Record in his right hand, soon will his account be taken by an easy reckoning, and he will turn to his people, rejoicing! But he who is given his Record behind his back, soon he will cry for perdition, and he will enter a blazing Fire." (84:7-12)

"Say: Truly, those in loss are those who lose their own souls and their People on the Day of Judgement; Ah! That is indeed the (real and) evident Loss!" (39:15)

The Paradise

Only those persons will be eligible to enter the Paradise who have spent their lives in the servitude of Allah. Allah promises:

"But those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, We shall soon admit them to Gardens, with rivers flowing beneath to dwell therein forever. Allah's promise is the truth, and whose word can be truer than Allah's?" (4:122)

"We have indeed created man in the best of moulds, then do We abase him (to be) the lowest of the low, except such as believe and do righteous deeds; for they shall have a reward unfailing." (95:4-6)

"Now no person knows what delights of the eye are kept hidden (in reserve) for them – as reward for their (good) deeds." (32:17)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) says:

"On the Day of Judgement, a person cannot take even one step forward until answers are not obtained from him about five things: In what manner did he spend his lifetime; in what manner did he spend his youth; how did he earn his wealth and where did he spend it; how far did he acted upon the true knowledge that he had acquired." (Tirmizi)

Another Saying narrates:

It is reported by Hazrat Jabir that the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said: "When the Companions of the Paradise would be enjoying the gifts of the Paradise, suddenly a kind of light descends on them. When they lift their heads, they will see their Lord (Allah) manifesting Himself to them. Then Allah will say: "Peace be upon you, O Companions of the Paradise." The Prophet further said: "Allah will look at them and they will look at Allah. As long as they keep looking at Allah, they will not pay any attention towards any other gifts of the Paradise, till Allah conceals Himself and there remains only His Light." (Ibn Maaja)

The Holy Quran portrays the Paradise thus:

"As to those who believe and work righteous deeds, they have, for their entertainment, the Gardens of Paradise, wherein they shall dwell (forever); no change they will wish for themselves." (18:107)

"But those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, to them shall We give a Home in Heaven – lofty mansions beneath which flow rivers – to dwell therein forever; an excellent reward for those who do (good)!" (29:58)

"But it is for those who fear their Lord, that lofty mansions, one above another, have been built; beneath them flow rivers (of delight); (such is) the Promise of Allah; never does Allah fail in (His) promise." (39:20)

"For them there will be therein all that they wish for; they will dwell (there) forever; a promise to be prayed for from your Lord." (25:16)

"As to the righteous (they will be) in a position of Security, among Gardens and Springs; dressed in fine silk and in rich brocade, they will face each other."

(44:51-53)

"Verily the Companions of the Garden shall that Day have joy in all that they do. They and their associates will be in groves of (cool) shade, reclining on thrones

(of dignity). (Every) fruit will be there for them; they shall have whatever they call for." (36:55-57)

"Gardens of Eternity will they enter; therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls; and their garments there will be of silk." (35:33)

"Upon them will be green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade, and they will be adorned with bracelets of silver; and their Lord will give them to drink of a wine pure and holy." (76:21)

"To them will be passed round, dishes and goblets of gold; there will be there all that the souls could desire, all that the eyes could delight in; and you shall abide therein (forever)." (43:71)

"And amongst them will be passed round vessels of silver and goblets of crystal – crystal-clear, made of silver; they will determine the measure thereof (according to their wishes)." (76:15-16)

"Reclining in the (Garden) on raised thrones, they will see there neither the sun's (excessive heat) nor (the moon's) excessive cold." (76:13)

"And the shades of the (Garden) will come low over them, and the bunches (of fruit), there, will hang low in humility." (76:14)

"Verily for the Righteous there will be a fulfilment of (the heart's) desire; gardens enclosed, and grapevines, companions of equal age, and a cup full (to the brim)." (78:31-34)

"Moreover, We shall join them to Companions with beautiful, big and lustrous eyes." (44:54)

"Therein will be thrones (of dignity), raised on high, goblets placed (ready), and cushions set in rows, and rich carpets (all) spread out." (88:12-16)

"Therein will they recline (at ease); therein can they call (at pleasure) for fruit in abundance, and delicious drink." (38:51)

"Round will be passed to them a cup from a clear-flowing fountain, crystal-white, of a taste delicious to those who drink (thereof), free from headiness; nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom." (37:45-47)

"Faces that Day will be joyful, pleased with their striving." (88:8-9)

"You will recognise in their faces the beaming brightness of Bliss." (83:24)

"No vanity shall they hear therein, not untruth." (78:35)

Moreover, they will always remain healthy and will always be happy in the Paradise. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) says in one of his Sayings:

"Here there will be such healthiness that they will never fall ill; the life will be such that there will not be any death; there will be such youthfulness that they will not age; and there will be such comfort that there will not be any hardship. The faces of the people will shine according to their good deeds; some will shine like stars and some like a full moon." (Muslim)

The aforesaid description about the Paradise is enough to create in the heart of every intelligent and discerning person a desire to acquire it. We should seriously make an effort to become eligible to get admittance into the Paradise. With the time and opportunities that we have got in this life, we can achieve success both in this world and in the Hereafter by becoming an obedient servant of Allah and by utilising the time appropriately in performance of good deeds.

The Hell

The Hell is the abode of the wicked and the sinners. They will face extreme hardship and torments therein. The Holy Quran warns:

> *"Say: 'Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works.' They are those who deny the Signs of their Lord and the fact of their having to meet Him (in the Hereafter); vain will be their works, nor shall We on the Day of Judgement, give them any weight. That is their reward, Hell; because they rejected Faith, and took My Signs and My Messengers by way of jest." (18:103-106)*

> *"Those who deny (their Lord), for them will be cut out a garment of Fire; over their heads will be poured out boiling water, with it will be scalded what is within their bodies, as well as (their) skins. In addition there will be maces of iron (to punish) them. Every time they wish to get away therefrom, from anguish, they will be forced back therein, and (it will be said), "Taste ye the Penalty of Burning!" (22:19-22)*[1]

> *"On the Day of Judgement, We shall gather them (the Unbelievers) together, prone on their faces, blind, dumb, and deaf; their abode will be Hell; every time it shows abatement, We shall increase for them the fierceness of the Fire." (17:97)*

> *"The Fire will burn their faces, and they will therein grin, with their lips displaced." (23:104)*

> *"(Can those in such Bliss) be compared to such as shall dwell forever in the Fire, and be given, to drink, boiling water, so that it cuts up their bowels (to pieces)?" (47:15)*

[1] See also the Quran, 32:20; 44:48.

"For the wrongdoers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent, will hem them in. If they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass that will scald their faces." (18:29)

"Verily the tree of Zaqqum will be the food of the sinful – like molten brass; it will boil in their insides, like the boiling of scalding water." (44:43-46)

"Truly, Hell is as a place of ambush – for the transgressors a place of destination. They will dwell therein for ages. Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink, save a boiling fluid and a fluid, dark, murky, intensely cold – a fitting recompense (for them)." (78:21-26)

"Nay, they deny the Hour (of the Judgement to come); but We have prepared a Blazing Fire for such as deny the Hour. When it sees them from a place far off, they will hear its fury and its raging sign. And when they are cast, bound together, into a constricted place therein, they will plead for destruction there and then! This day plead not for a single destruction; plead for a destruction oft-repeated!" (25:11-14)

In view of the aforesaid facts proved with sound and logical arguments that this world is a place where man has to work under the Divine Guidance to achieve success in this world and salvation in the Hereafter, that man has to give an account of his life in the Hereafter where he will be rewarded or punished according to his good or bad deeds, the Holy Quran further cautions that man will not reborn again and that he should make haste in turning back towards Allah and become His obedient servant and lead his life according to His Instructions and Guidance. The Holy Quran avers:

"Turn to your Lord (in repentance) and bow to His (Will), before the Penalty comes on you; after that you shall not be helped. And follow the Best of (the courses) revealed to you from your Lord, before the Penalty comes on you – of a sudden, while you perceive not! – Lest the soul should (then) say: 'Ah! Woe is me! – In that I neglected (my duty) towards Allah, and was but among those who mocked! Or (lest) it should say: 'If only Allah had guided me, I should certainly have been among the righteous! Or (lest) it should say when it (actually) sees the Penalty: 'If only I had another chance, I should certainly be among those who do good! (The reply will be): 'Nay, but there came to you My Signs, and you did reject them; you were haughty, and became one of those who reject Faith." *(39:54-59)*

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WHAT IS AFTER DEATH?

Dr. Syed Shahid Ali

"Nay (behold), you prefer the life of this world; but the Hereafter is better and more enduring."

(The Quran, 87:16-17)

"They know but the outer (things) in the life of this world; but of the End of things they are heedless. Do they not reflect in their own minds? Not but for just ends and for a term appointed, did Allah create the heavens and the earth, and all between them; yet are there truly many among men who deny their meeting with their Lord (at the Resurrection)."

(The Quran, 30:7-8)

Perfect justice is impossible in this world. Suppose, a man murders ten persons and if caught he can be hanged only once. This is not full justice. Full justice demands that the murderer should be hanged ten times after resurrecting him every time. Apart from that, the murdered persons should also be given life again so that they could witness their murderer being hanged and thus get satisfied that full justice has been done. Is there any other world where such thing can happen?

A man commits theft and is jailed for it. He suffers in jail, but his mother also suffers along with him as long as he remains in the jail. Although the crime was committed by the son, but the mother is also punished.

The mother suffered because there is an emotional link between her and his son. If this link were to be severed, then the child, in his infancy, could not have been looked after and would certainly have died. Hence, to mete out full justice there should be such a world where there should not be any emotional link between them so that only the culprit is made to suffer and not anyone else. Is there such a world?

Millions of people get benefitted by the work of a good person. Similarly, millions suffer because of one evil person. In this fleeting world, neither the good person can be fully rewarded nor can the evil person be fully punished. Why is it?

We observe that there is reaction to every action. When a person strikes another person, he becomes unconscious. When a hungry person eats, he is satiated. When a patient takes medicines, he becomes healthy again. But there are many actions in this world whose reactions we cannot see. For example, you helped a blind person cross the road; removed a harmful substance from the street or road; or fed a hungry person when you yourself were hungry; what is the reaction of such actions?

Whatever gifts man gets, they essentially bring along with them some sort of responsibilities and accountability. Also they bring with them fear and sorrow. The greater the gift, the greater will be the fear and sorrow of its being taken away. Why is it?

There is always a meeting place for all relationships. The meeting place of the relationship of a doctor and a patient is the clinic. The court is the meeting place of the relationship of an advocate and his client. The meeting place of the relationship of a teacher and student is the classroom. The home is the

meeting place of the relationship of the parents and the children. Which is the meeting place of the relationship of the Creator (Allah) and the Created (man)?

To achieve fullest happiness, it is necessary that man is able to get and enjoy all his requirements; fulfil all his desires; his present and future are secured; all his kin are present before him (I cannot be happy without my father; my father cannot be happy without his father; and my grandfather cannot be happy without his father...); all are hail and healthy; everyone is wealthy; none should have any disease; none should be old; none should be afflicted with any calamity; none should die, etc. But this is impossible in this world. Why man does not get fullest happiness in this world?

Just ponder; what will happen if every human being is removed from this earth? It makes no difference. Sun will rise; the seawater is converted into vapours by its heat; clouds will be formed by the vapours; from the clouds there will be rain; and the water-cycle will continue as ever.

Ponder again; what will happen if human beings were to remain on the earth, but either sun, or the air, or the water were to be removed? The entire system of the earth will collapse. From this, it is proved that man usually gets benefitted from this system and does not contribute anything beneficial to it, while all other things benefit man. So, it is understood that the entire structure of this earth is for man, then for which structure man has been created?

There is difference between a living and a dead person. A live person gets different thoughts in his mind; he can talk and can perform various actions.

According to Psychology, there are two parts of the human mind: Conscience and Sub-Conscience. The sub-conscience is the store of the human mind. Every small and big thought gets deposited in it. If a person loses his memory and then regains it again, he will remember everything. Sometimes, a person sees happenings of his childhood in his dreams. It is proved from this that man's thoughts are preserved somewhere, and that is how they return back. Man's every small and big thought is being recorded in his sub-conscience. Why this record of the thoughts is being prepared?

According to Physics, the sound which man emanates and whatever he speaks, do not perish; rather the sound will be moving around in the air at the rate of 1125 feet per second. So far man has progressed that he is able to record and hear the sounds that had emanated in the past. However, these sounds are all mixed-up sounds; man has not yet been able to separate them, but he is trying to separate them and hear them. From this, it is evident that every small and big sound emanated by man is being recorded. Why this recording is being made?

Heat waves are radiated from man's body. These heat waves make photographs of man's each and every action – standing, sitting, lying down. It has been reported in the November 1960 issue of the Readers Digest that an aeroplane passed through American. Two hours after its passage, a photograph of the passengers of that aeroplane was taken from the vacant space. The camera which takes the photograph of a person from the vacant place after he passes away from that place is known as "evaporagraph." The only dispute is that whether man's picture remains forever

or for a few hours after his moving away; it is possible that it will remain forever. Man has not progressed far enough to take the photograph of a person from a vacant place many years after he has vacated the place; but it is possible. From this, it is evident that man's each and every action is being recorded. Why this recording of man's movements is being made?

Why man's thoughts, talks and deeds and movements are being recoded? Are they being recorded to be placed before a court of justice where some kind of judgement will be passed?

Allah (God) has given answers to all these questions. Allah has intimated that man has been created to live forever. Man's life has been divided into two parts. One pertains to life before death which is very short and is meant for man's test and trial. The second part pertains to life after death which lasts forever, in which man is either punished or rewarded for his deeds in life before death in the form of Hell or Paradise. The life after death is known as *Akhira* or the Hereafter. Belief in the Hereafter gives answers to all the questions raised by man.

The story of life does not end with death as a full film while being screened does not end if suddenly it is announced in the middle of the film that it has ended, or as a story is ended in the middle itself. If this were to happen the audience of the film and the reader of the storybook would never agree to it; he would like to know the end. It is expected from the producer of the film or the writer of the storybook to describe and show the end too. Similarly, will any intelligent and intellectual person accept that the story of our life will end with death though it is still incomplete and Allah

has not yet shown the consequences of our present life? Actually, the Hereafter is the real end.

The concept of a life after death is found in every religion including the Hinduism. The Vedas talk about a new life which means the life after death. There is no mention of *Avagaman* (transmigration) and *Punarjanm* (rebirth) in the Vedas. Rebirth and transmigration are two separate things. Vedas mention only *Punarjeevan* (new life), which means that man will be resurrected to taste the fruits of his deeds, while *Avagaman* (transmigration) means till the attainment of *Moksha* (release from the cycle of rebirth), man has to undergo the cycle of rebirth 84 lakh times in this world according to his deeds. In the era of Upanishad, *Punarjanm* and *Avagaman* were considered one and the same. Chandogya Upanishad was the first to mention about *Punarjanm* (not only in the Hereafter but in this world too man takes birth according to his deeds).

The word *Punarjanm* begins with the word *"Punah"* which means "again" and not "again and again." Even then, adopting the meaning of "again and again," it was established through the Upanishads and through the Puranas, Ramayana, Mahabharata and other religious books it was given excessive circulation. It also includes the ceremony held for the peace of the deceased person, which is also against the concept of rebirth.

According to the Quran, man will be created again after his death. This life will be an everlasting life. The life in this world is a place to perform good or bad deeds and the eternal life after death is the place to get rewarded or punished on the basis of such deeds.

Every man who takes birth on this earth takes birth with a return ticket, and he waits for its confirmation his entire life. Death is the confirmation of this return ticket.

It is not right for man to say that life is a misery by seeing sickness, old age and poverty in life, because this could be an idea of a human being, while the right thing about sickness, old age and poverty is described by Allah, Who is the creator of these things. Allah tells us that the life in this world is a test and trial for man. Sickness is a question paper of this test, old age is the warning that the test is about to end, and death announces the end of the test.

About 150,000 people die every day. Where do they go? This is a very important question. You cannot close your eyes from this question. No scholar or intellectual will be able to give an answer to this question; only religion can answer this question. Among the religions, only that religion can give the right answer which has fully preserved the Message of the Creator of life and death.

Is the time for the death or end of the test and trial of every person already fixed? The Holy Quran says, yes the time of death of every man is fixed.

> *"Nor can a soul die except by Allah's leave, the term being fixed as by writing."* *(3:145)*

Islam wants man to remember his death quite often, because it would have good effect on his life; the laziness that comes in his way in performing righteous deeds is removed and he hastens to perform good deeds; he stops committing evil deeds and gives them up and seeks forgiveness of Allah. Moreover, he also stops committing oppression.

Islam prohibits commitment of suicide, because it shows disillusionment towards Allah and also shows opposition to the Scheme of Allah. Prophet Muhammad says:

> *"No one amongst you should (for any reason whatsoever) desire death nor should he pray for an early death. Because, at the onset of death the chain of deeds gets broken, and for the one who believes in Allah (according to His Guidance), his age becomes the cause for the increase in his good deeds." (Muslim)*
>
> *"Do not pray for death or desire for it. If it becomes necessary for a person to pray for it, he should pray in this manner: 'O Allah, keep me alive as long as life is better for me, and take me away (from the world) when death is better for me." (Nasai)*

The gist of the aforesaid statements is that we should accept the tenet of Oneness of God in such a way that we should not associate anyone in His Entity, His Attributes, His Authority, His Power and His Sovereignty. The Final Prophet of Allah, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh), has described in detail the method of Allah's worship and also has practically performed it. The Final Divine Book, the Holy Quran, was also revealed on Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), which has been preserved in its original form. This Book is the Divine Guidance for the entire mankind. It is essential to follow the truths and teachings contained in this Book to achieve success in this world and salvation in the Hereafter.

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PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE HEREAFTER FROM TODAY ITSELF

Muhammad Zainul Abdeen Mansoori

The end of this worldly life is a universal truth. Yes, there can be difference of opinion, and there is a difference of opinion, as to what will happen after the end of this life. The opinion of the religion is that there is a life after death. The atheists and other irreligious people are of the opinion that there is no life after death; they say that after death we will perish forever. It is impossible for us to have a new life after obtaining new bodies when our present bodies have become rotten and turn into dust or burnt into ashes.

Difference in Effect

Everyone is free to accept any of the aforesaid viewpoints, i.e. none of the viewpoints can be forced upon. However, since in the entire universe man is the only creature who has been bestowed by his Creator with intellect and intelligence, that very intellect demands that he should ponder about the effects of these two viewpoints on his life in respect of his thoughts, dealings, character, conduct, etc. This is the thing which differentiates man from animals and demons, and also gives him eminence, honour and respect.

Effect of the First Viewpoint

The fundamental belief of the religious parties is "full trust in God." Here God is believed to be the Creator, Lord, Sustainer, Nourisher, Administrator, Guardian, Judge, Worthy of Worship and Obedience. This viewpoint essentially expects that man should be an obedient servant of God. His life should be full of good and righteous deeds, and it should be quite different from the life of disobedient, unrighteous, rebellious and tyrannical people.

Effect of the Other Viewpoint

The effect of the atheistic viewpoint is that there remains only a small difference between man and animals as regards the objective and style of life. The objective of life of animals is "eat, drink and die," while man adds one more thing to it: "eat, drink, enjoy and die." This "small" difference takes down man and the society to the lowest position of humanity, and by damaging the human honour, dignity and eminence destroys the humanity itself. This is the reason that looting, suppression, exploitation, malpractice, massacre, chaos, promiscuity, injustice and corruption are widespread in the world. Extensive criminalisation has created an atmosphere of fear.

There are three fundamental reasons for these problems: One, denial of the Divine religion; two, apathy and indifference towards the religion even after claiming to believe in it; and three, lack of ability and power in the religious beliefs and conceptions of nearly 75 per cent of the population to convince them and make them strongly believe that they are answerable before God. Such a strong belief that man is answerable before God for his deeds will make man

(and the society and the collective system) pious, honest, ethical, courteous and beneficent, and save them from evil, wrongdoing, oppression, injustice, persecution, etc.

The Viewpoint of Islam

Islam is one of those religions which believe in life after death. This belief is one of its three fundamental beliefs – Oneness of God; the Hereafter; and the Prophethood. Its simple definition is as follows:

Man has been given a short life in this world, but actually human life is very long. This life has two stages which apparently are separate, but they actually complement each other and are mutually connected. As soon as this worldly life ends, man's soul reaches the life of the Hereafter. On the Day of Judgement the man's destroyed body will be recreated again by the mighty creative power of Allah and man's own soul will be inducted into it. Then every human being born from the beginning of the world to its end will be presented before Allah. Everyone's "Book of Deeds" will be opened up and full justice will be done while taking the accounts. No partiality will be shown based on family, colour, language, race, nationality, caste, status, country, etc. All the worldly criteria of rich and poor, ruler and ruled, master and servant, powerful and weak, lowly and high, etc. will be of no value in the court of justice of Allah, the Almighty, the Unbiased Adjudicator, the Omnipotent and the Omniscient. Everyone will be judged infallibly and with full and true justice. Everyone will be handed over his Book of Deeds and the result sheet. The righteous will be asked to enter the Paradise and the wicked will be thrown into the Hell. In the Paradise there will be a permanent

life of peace and tranquillity and such other gifts of comfort and luxury will be provided in it that one cannot imagine them in this fleeting, mortal and limited life. In the Hell, there will be unbearable sufferings, torture and punishment of fire, which one cannot even imagine in this world.

Demand of Human Nature

If the human nature is firmly established on its true nature and is not sullied and deformed by internal and external factors, its simple characteristics demand that:

- The end of both the righteous and the unrighteous should not be one and the same, i.e. their lives should not end after their death.
- After the death, the end of the righteous and the obedient of Allah and the unrighteous and the disobedient of Allah should be quite different and it should be according to their deeds and actions performed in this world.
- Those who were able to escape the punishment or were symbolically punished in this world for their evildoings, oppression and acts of injustice because of their wealth, power, recommendation, tyranny, or because of the fallibility, restrictive or biased nature of the worldly laws, should be judged again and given the deserved punishments.
- Those people who were oppressed and tyrannized in this world and who did not got full justice or no justice at all in this world, should get full justice at some other place, because you cannot even imagine that Allah has left the human beings and the human society to suffer anarchy in this world.

- Those who remained steadfast on the path of Truth even after suffering pain, losses and facing dangers and who faced storms of oppression, tyranny with patience and constancy and who were never fully rewarded or not rewarded at all for their steadfastness on Truth, should be fully rewarded somewhere or sometime.

The Islamic Concept of the Hereafter

The Islamic concept of the Hereafter fulfils the expectations of human life. This concept is in accord with the human nature. This fulfils and satisfies the aforesaid demands of the human nature in a competent, effective, intelligent and natural manner.

Comparison with the other Concepts

Many concepts are found in the world about the life after death. By comparing them with the Islamic concept, the importance and loftiness of the Islamic concept can very easily be seen:

1. One concept is that it is enough if one just believes in a certain power or personality to attain salvation or entry into the Paradise. This belief nullifies the concept of good and bad, righteousness and unrighteousness, good behaviour and bad behaviour. What type of man and what type of a society can be built up with such kind of a concept? It is pointless to say what kind of character and what kind of ethical environment this belief will create. Particularly, for the past fifty years the entire world is looking at the mentality and civilization produced by this belief and the

resulting chaos and is bearing with its bad consequences.

2. Another belief is that the life itself in this world is Paradise for the good and Hell for the bad. In other words, there is no need for the Hereafter. Those who believe in this concept very seriously ponder and think intelligently about all other issues and matters of the world, but usually give up "seriousness" at the very first step in the matter where it should have been used more diligently, i.e. in the matter whether the wicked are fully punished in this world itself or the righteous are fully rewarded. This is not only unrealistic but illogical too. This is completely against our daily experience and observation.
3. The third belief is that after this life, the soul of a person, according to his deeds, will enter into a good or bad creature, and after the death of those creatures, the cycle of death and rebirth continues. A manifest defect in this belief is that it does not play any role in the development of man's character and conduct in this life and fails to prepare him to give a good account of this life before Allah in the Hereafter.

The Islamic concept of life after death which has been described in the foregoing pages has the inherent solution for the limitations or defects of the aforesaid three beliefs. The Islamic viewpoint is quite clear, precise and is devoid of any confusion and complexity. The Islamic concept is that (1) everyone's actions whether done alone or in public, in darkness or in light, Allah is well aware of them and that Allah's angels are recording them; (2) as the Omnipotent Allah has created man for the first time with his infinite

power (although man did not exist before), similarly recreating man again is not at all difficult for Him (when the remains and DNA of his body is available in some part or the other of the earth, the atmosphere and the universe); (3) every person will be justly compensated in the Hereafter for all the deeds that he has performed in the world; (4) and this compensation will be either in the form of Paradise or Hell.

Life in the Hereafter according to the Quran

The basic source of Islam is the Divine Book known as the Quran. Every unbiased (both Muslim and non-Muslim) scholar, intellectual and researcher has acknowledged the historicity, authenticity and reliability of this Book. From the beginning to the end, this Book is Divine Revelation and is free from any human intervention. It contains laws and guidance for the entire human life. It describes the status of man, the purpose of his creation, the true description of Allah, the relationship between man and Allah, man's duties towards Allah, man's rights and his duties towards other human beings and creatures, the nature and method of worship and servitude of Allah, and details of life after death. The Holy Quran contains many Verses pertaining to the Hereafter. Translation of a few of them is given below:

> *"But how (will they fare) when We gather them together against a Day about which there is no doubt, and each soul will be paid out just what it has earned, without (favour or) injustice?"* *(3:25)*
>
> *"And the Book (of Deeds) will be placed (before you); and you will see the sinful in great terror because of what is (recorded) therein; they will say: 'Ah! Woe to us! What a book is this! It leaves out nothing small or*

great, but takes account thereof!' They will find all that they did, placed before them; and not one will your Lord treat with injustice." (18:49)

"And fear the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then shall every soul be paid what it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly." (2:281)

"Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it)." (50:18)

"It is the same (to Him) whether any of you conceal his speech or declare it openly; whether he lie hid by night or walk forth freely by day." (13:10)

"Every soul shall have a taste of death; and only on the Day of Judgement shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the object (of life); for the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception." (3:185)

"Does man think that We cannot assemble his bones? Nay, We are able to put together in perfect order the very tips of his fingers. But man wishes to do wrong (even) in the time in front of him." (75:3-5)

Description of the Hereafter in the *Hadeeth* (Sayings of the Prophet)

In the Islamic terminology, the Sayings and the Conduct of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) are known as *Hadeeth.* A complete record of such Sayings and Traditions of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) had been made during the era of the Prophet itself through his trustworthy male and female Companions. All the Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), his conduct, activities, his commands and instructions, and his explanation of various Quranic Verses have all been recorded, compiled and preserved in the early days of Islam itself, whose original and translations are

available even today. A few of the Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) about the Hereafter, the Paradise and the Hell are given below:

> *It is reported by Hazrat Abu Barza Aslami that the Prophet of Allah said: "On the Day of Judgement, a person cannot take even one step forward until answers are not obtained from him about five things: In what manner did he spend his lifetime; in what manner did he spend his youth; how did he earn his wealth and where did he spend it; how far did he acted upon the true knowledge that he had acquired."*
>
> *(Tirmizi)*

It is narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurairah that the Prophet of Allah asked: "Do you know who is a bankrupt (a poor person)?" People said: "According to us, a bankrupt is one who has neither any Dirhams nor any other belongings." He (the Prophet) said: "The bankrupt of my Brotherhood is that who, on the Day of Judgement, will bring with him (a huge stock of) Prayers, Fasting and Zakat, but will also bring along (bad deeds like) he would have abused someone, would have falsely accused someone of adultery, would have devoured the wealth of others, would have murdered someone, and would have beaten someone, in which event all the recompense of his good deeds would be given to those who were oppressed by him, and if the good deeds get exhausted before compensating the oppressed, their sins will be tossed upon him (i.e. added on to his Book of Deeds) and then he will be thrown into the Fire." (Muslim)

> *It is narrated by Hazrat Ibn Abbas that the Prophet of Allah said: "When a girl-child is born to a person, and he does not bury her alive, nor does he despise her, nor gives preference to his sons over her, Allah will admit him into the Paradise."* *(Abu Dawood)*

It is narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurairah that the Prophet of Allah said: "May he be disgraced." He repeated this thrice. People asked him: "Who got disgraced, O Prophet of Allah." He said: "That person who had with him both his parents, or any one of them, in their old age and did not enter Paradise (after serving them)." *(Muslim)*

Practical Results of the Teachings about the Hereafter

In Islam, the concept of life after death and the life in the Hereafter is not just an unclear or philosophical hypothesis; rather it is a very clear, definite and strong belief in Islam. This belief has revolutionised the individual human being and the human society in such a manner that its description is found in the pages of history. Out of its innumerable practical results, a few are briefly mentioned below:

- The Arabs used to drink wine just like water and they had coined two hundred names for it in their language. When these Arabs accepted Islam and when the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) made an announcement that Verses have been revealed prohibiting drinking of wine and that any Muslim who drinks even a drop of wine will have to taste the Fire of Hell, the people immediately stopped drinking wine and broke the vessels of wine; those who were about to drink the wine threw away the glasses of wine; those who had already drank it, tried to vomit it out; in the wine party one who dared to drink even after hearing the announcement, was beaten up by others present in the party.

- On the birth of a girl-child, faces used to become darkened with grief [*"When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief."* (The Quran, 16:58)] For various reasons, daughters were used to be buried alive. Quranic Verses were revealed (81:8-9) against this barbaric practice and the Prophet of Allah also gave specific instructions against it, after which people began to happily and willingly welcome female children in their families as a means of getting admitted into the Paradise. Thus killing of female children was completely abolished in the Muslim society.
- Young people began to particularly honour, respect, obey and serve their parents in their old age, because Islam told them that they get admittance into Paradise by honouring and serving them.

The Islamic concept of life after death (the Hereafter, the Divine Justice, full recompense of the deeds, the desire to enter the Paradise and the anxiety to save oneself from the Hell) has not left untouched and unaffected any of the segment of human life. It is a historically proved fact that when the most ignorant, uncivilised, uncultured, illiterate, uncouth, vicious, immoral, and alcoholising people of the then world (i.e. Arabs) accepted Islam and the Islamic concept of the Hereafter, they became epitome of morality, honesty, civilization, mercy, forgiveness, social service, virtue, selflessness, sacrifice, knowledge, and human values. The cause of this total revolution was the Islamic concept of the Hereafter along with the pure and perfect concept of monotheism.

Do we want to become good human beings? Are we not desirous of cultivating a good family, good society, and a good collective system? Don't we want to eradicate immorality, oppression, corruption, injustice, strife, crime, killing of women and female infanticide? Certainly, every one of us is desirous of all these things. Then, come, let us accept the Islamic concept of the Hereafter and without losing any time let us start to prepare ourselves for the Hereafter from today itself. May Allah help and guide us in this regard. Amen!

ALMIGHTY ALLAH SAYS IN THE QURAN:

> *Say (O Prophet): "The Truth is from your Lord." Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it). For the wrongdoers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent, will hem them in. If they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass that will scald their faces. How dreadful the drink! How uncomfortable a couch to recline on!*
>
> *As to those who believe and work righteousness, verily We shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a (single) righteous deed. For them will be Gardens of Eternity; beneath them rivers will flow. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade; they will recline therein on raised thrones. How beautiful a couch to recline on!*
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> *(The Quran, 18:29-31)*

Note: To know more about the Islamic concept of life in the Hereafter, reading and understanding of the Holy Quran is quite essential.

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